



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE  
**BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLIS  
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ  
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 0648

Giovedì 21.09.2023

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- ◆ **Intervento di S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher alla Riunione di Alto-livello sulla prevenzione, preparazione e risposta alle pandemie**

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher, Segretario per i Rapporti con gli Stati e le Organizzazioni Internazionali della Segreteria di Stato, ha pronunciato ieri a New York alla Riunione di Alto-Livello sulla prevenzione, preparazione e risposta alle pandemie:

Intervento di S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher

**Statement by H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher,  
Secretary for Relations with States and International Organizations of the Holy See, at the High-level Meeting on  
Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response  
20 September 2023**

Mr. President,

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic reminded all of us, once again, of our frailty, of our fundamental interconnectedness and dependence on each other, as well as of our responsibility towards the others. Indeed, as Pope Francis recalled “a healthy society is one that takes care of everyone’s health.”[1]

During the pandemic, we witnessed much good will and dedication, at all levels of Government and spheres of society. This is also true of the effort to swiftly develop, produce, and distribute, diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines for COVID-19. Yet, it remains concerning that the percentage of people in low-income Countries who have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine is about half of the rate in high-income Countries.[2] Putting global solidarity into practice requires prioritizing universal access to health technologies, particularly for the most vulnerable.

During the pandemic, limited production capacity, combined with vast differences in purchasing power, created disparities in access, which generosity alone could not overcome. Resolving this for future pandemics requires a developmental approach, reflecting the deep links between poverty and poor health. It also requires capacity building in developing countries to promote local research, innovation, production, and distribution. Beyond a “quick fix”, it is necessary to ensure that an equitable response may be given in future pandemics. Considering that durable solutions often take longer to achieve, we have no time to waste.

Mr. President,

All trustworthy responses to health emergencies must respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of opinion, and expression, freedom of conscience and freedom of religion or belief. They must include solidarity mechanisms aimed at helping countries to provide medicines and adequate health-care to their populations, while respecting their cultural sensibility and sovereignty. Moreover, the sharing of scientific information and know-how at international level is also critical. In this regard, it is worth repeating that international organizations such as the World Health Organization have a significant role to play in order to encourage and facilitate coordination and cooperation, but that this also requires constantly to build trust with and among the countries.

Mr. President,

As Pope Francis has stated, “the greatest lesson we learned from Covid-19 was the realization that we all need one another [... and] that none of us can be saved alone.”[3] Let us hope that this remains the conviction which drives this meeting, and that may inspire the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body and of the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations in Geneva. We never emerge from a crisis unchanged; it is up to us to ensure that that change is for the better[4].

Thank you, Mr. President.

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[1] Pope Francis, General Audience, 9 September 2020.

[2] UNDP, Global Dashboard for Vaccine Equity, <https://data.undp.org/vaccine-equity/> (35.85% compared to 72.89%, as of 23 August 2023).

[3] Pope Francis, *Message for the LVI World Day of Peace*, 1 January 2023.

[4] Cf. Pope Francis, Address to the participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life, 27 September 2023.

[01437-EN.01] [Original text: English]

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher, Segretario per i Rapporti con gli Stati e le Organizzazioni Internazionali della Segreteria di Stato, ha pronunciato ieri a New York al Consiglio di Sicurezza della Nazioni Unite:

Intervento di S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher

**Statement by His Excellency Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher  
Secretary for the Relations with States and International Organizations  
at the Open Debate United Nation Security Council**

**“Upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter through effective multilateralism: maintenance of  
peace and security of Ukraine”**

New York, 20 September 2023

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General,

This Open Debate of the Security Council takes place in the context of the cruel and senseless war against Ukraine, which, with great sacrifice, is defending its sovereignty and the inviolability of its internationally recognised borders. These are the same values promoted and shared since the foundation of this noble Organisation. Faced with the ongoing tragedy, a spontaneous question arises: against whom is this war being waged? It is before the eyes of everyone that those paying the highest price are civilian, simple people and, above all, children, youth and the elderly.

War is a great evil, and at present we can see that it is expanding more and more, beyond the Ukrainian borders, covering with its thick shadow not only Europe, but also other continents and, above all, infiltrating human hearts, making them containers of a 'logic of war'. Truly, as Pope Francis reminds, we are witnessing World War III, which is being 'fought piecemeal'.

It is undeniable that the Russian attack on Ukraine has jeopardised the entire global order, which arose after World War II. Its negative consequences can already be glimpsed in the humanitarian, demographic, food, socio-political, legal, economic, ecological, military, nuclear, energy, health, educational, religious, migratory and other spheres, which are altogether fundamental elements of the architecture of world security. Evil is incapable of generating good. Aggression can only generate new aggression. If this war is not stopped and peace is not sought at every turn, the whole world risks plunging into even deeper crises.

The solution to the war in Ukraine is not only a matter for Ukraine itself. In the face of the tragedy unfolding before our eyes, it is due time to ask ourselves some of Pope Francis' questions: "What am I doing today for the Ukrainian people? Am I doing something?" Today, the entire international community, more than ever, cannot surrender itself and let this issue pass by in silence. In order to have a peaceful and secure future, all Member States of the United Nations, and especially those of this Security Council, are called upon to join efforts in the search for a just and lasting peace for Ukraine, as an important element of the global peace of which the world thirsts. It is better and cheaper for all to invest in peace instead of war!

The Holy See, for its part, is close to Ukraine and fully upholds its territorial integrity and, moreover, continues to engage in humanitarian initiatives aimed at alleviating the suffering of the Ukrainian population, especially that part of it which is weakest and most vulnerable while, at the same time, urging all States and relevant International Organizations to become creative and courageous artisans of peace and weavers of constructive dialogue.

Peace is not a reality whose features and properties are unknown. Everyone knows what peace is. It will surely come when there is a common commitment to implement it not only at the international, institutional level but also in our own hearts and homes.

To all of you, and especially to the tormented Ukraine, I would like to extend my heartfelt wish that the desired peace may return to cheer the whole world.

Thank you, Mr. President.

[01438-EN.01] [Original text: English]

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